



D P ACTION

Disabled Persons' Assembly—Christchurch and Districts
Issue: May-June 2003

Peace Is A Disability Issue

LET ALL OF US JOIN TOGETHER IN A WORLDWIDE MOVEMENT FOR
PEACE.

LET US CALL FOR ALL NATIONS' ECONOMIES TO BE TRANSFORMED
FROM WAR ECONOMIES TO PEACE ECONOMIES.

LET US INSIST THAT THE \$600 BILLION NOW SPENT ON ARMAMENTS IS
DIVERTED TO SOCIALLY USEFUL PROJECTS.

LET US DEMAND THAT THE WORLD LEADERS NOW, IN THIS MOMENTOUS
EPOCH, WHERE WE HAVE THE POWER TO DESTROY AND CRIPPLE, BEGIN
THE ENORMOUS TASK OF REDIRECTING OUR RESOURCES, OUR PRO-
DUCTIONS, OUR TALENTS AND OUR ABILITIES FROM THE CREATION OF
THE WEAPONS OF WAR TO THE CREATION OF INSTRUMENTS OF LIFE.

Disabled Peoples' International, Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima, Japan, June 24, 1982.

The Disabled Peoples' International called on all people to affirm this movement and endorsed the 1982 declaration with the following statement at **the DPI World Assembly Sapporo Platform October 2002.**

Peace

As disabled people we are opposed to wars, violence and all forms
of oppression.

Daily, men, women and children are being disabled by land and per-
sonnel mines, and forms of armed destruction and torture.

We must work for a world where all people can live in peace and ex-
press their diversity and their desires.

President's Message

Greetings to you all, and what a tremendously busy time this has been.

Directly following our Regional Executive meeting in March committee members attended the promotion of the implementation of the primary health care strategy and development of primary health organizations around NZ. References were made to the trial north island areas where there are large numbers of Maori and Pacific Island people in the communities. It is to become a national system but the predominantly health professional audience challenged the proposals, primarily the two models of funding. As the consumer we have to register with a primary health organization which may for example be a group of GPs. In turn these new entities will be funded by formula. The transient nature of some patients was of major concern.

The Christchurch Polytechnic recently sought dialogue with the DPA as part of its stakeholder consultation. A survey and face to face meeting with the consultants was arranged. See DPA Happenings for further details and the opportunity to be involved (page 3 and 6). Coincidentally, the Co-ordinator and I went later in the day to talk to the Disability Advisory Committee CPIT to raise the profile of DPA on campus, increase membership and invited the Polytechnic's corporate membership which has eventuated. We had a great two way sharing of information as to disabled students could benefit from tertiary education. Accessibility, affordability, and access were again issues discussed.

The Civil Defence exercise resulted in a terrific representation from the disability community: DPA committee members and a large contingent from the Richmond Stroke Club. I believe that it was a very valuable exercise for all concerned. It gave us a view of what to expect on arrival at a post and also it was a learning time for the civil defence personnel who had not actually dealt with real disabled people before. It was very apparent that greater individual care needs to be provided for disabled people. Much information was gleaned for the de briefing and it was a worthwhile exercise.

As the formally co-opted DPA representative on the CDHB – Disability Support Advisory Committee I attended my first meeting as a member on your behalf. Some current happenings are pertinent to us. From October Disability Service provision and funding is to be managed by the DHB whereas previously it has been managed by the MOH—a major change. A presentation from Enable funding - the people who usually provide the disability equipment that we need was followed by another by Link-Age. This organization is responsible for the operation of the CDHB services for the over 65 age group and consequently for the new split in disability services. Ultimately this system will provide us with better services, and people will not need to be continually assessed by different service providers, hopefully once will be sufficient. Time will tell I suspect.

The March Total Mobility Meeting issues related to the National Co-ordinators meeting and the TM review survey forms which have been randomly distributed. Thank you to DPA members who took the time to complete such a critical survey. In the evening I attended a meeting of the National Council of Women. A summary of our input to the Women's Action Plan had been made and sent to the Minister of Women's Affairs Ruth Dyson.

DPA accepted an opportunity to speak to residents of St John of God at the request of Olive Brown. Although Olive was not in attendance there was a group of approximately 20 people. While we were able to promote DPA, Total Mobility information was also shared. Of course the residents were very taken with guide dog Jet. Almost everyone were confined to wheelchairs and the visit for me was extremely humbling. I was amazed at the activity programme that is on offer.

My best wishes to you all

Regards

Gloria Weeks

DPA President

DPA Happenings

Community Mapping Project

is a local initiative which aims to:

- identify key demographic and social measurements and trends;
- gain a picture of current social services provision in the community, including government & non government provision and resourcing of services;
- identify key stakeholder's perceptions of effective interventions and local solutions

The Project is a collaboration between Christchurch City Council, Child Youth and Family, Department of Internal Affairs, He Oranga Pounamu, Healthy Christchurch, Strengthening Families and Safer Christchurch.

The DPA Coordinator completed a survey interview with a researcher and a followup participatory workshop provided an opportunity to discuss DPA's perceptions on:

- What trends are affecting/or will potentially impact on the people of Christchurch?
- As a city, what outcomes should be our goals?
- What critical factors are/would contribute to achieving these positive outcomes?
- What are the barriers/limitations to achieving the desired outcomes, including gaps in service

This project will be used to inform the CCC long term community plan and CYF local service mapping processes as well as being available to community groups for their planning. More information is available from the website

<http://library.christchurch.org.nz/Community/Mapping/>

Human Rights Network Speakers' Forum

DPA has three DPA representatives on this committee which meets regularly to plan 6 weekly fora relevant to Human Rights issues. The first forum for the year was on Terrorism with the speaker Graham Wrigley, Director of Red Cross ChCh and a member of the UN Humanitarian Law Committee speaking on the Geneva/UN Conventions. The neutrality of the Red Cross is a critical aspect of their role in war zones. The progressive but protracted evolution of what would be considered automatic human rights in times of war was particularly illuminating.

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu

A widely representative group of DPA members conducted a preliminary accessibility review of the new gallery. The architect Rowland Fretwell had

maintained a vigilant eye on 'disability related aspects' and it was admirable that the new facility was so disability friendly.

A further opportunity, prior to the official opening on 10 May, will enable us to cement our already favourable impression of a truly remarkable building and significant asset to the Christchurch.

RED Bus Company

On 18 March we had an on site meeting with representatives from the Red Bus Company and bus designer Phil Hindin. See further details in John Brown and Graham Tapper's contribution to this newsletter.

Disability Support Services Action Group

The core group including, DPA representatives, continue to apply themselves to the challenging task in planning for the process seeking a redress in the disparity between ACC and DSS. Following the successful meeting with Ruth Dyson preparation for the submission has included:

- A comparative analysis of the DSS Equipment Guidelines with:
 - NZ Disability Strategy
 - ACC equipment guidelines
 - Human Rights Act protections.
- Information gathering on a cost/benefit analysis of independence versus ongoing dependence through lack of access to relevant equipment.
- Identification of case studies specific to equipment guidelines. Success stories need to be included.
- Relevant Department of Statistics data.

Tertiary Education Reforms

A consultancy team contracted by the Christchurch Polytechnic CPIT sought the DPA's insights into and information on our expectations and experiences of tertiary education; policies and procedure and areas for improvement re access, content, eligibility, and affordability.

We were also grateful to those members who emailed their contributions or attended the face to face meeting. *"We received a copy of the final draft document of our contribution and believe it is terrific" states Gloria Weeks DPA President..* The Polytechnic will use the information to inform its strategic direction as part of their requirement to reflect stakeholder expectations in their planning.

Bus Pioneers

Remember when Christchurch buses were “out” as far as **we** were concerned.? Steep steps **were** the norm. **Now** all that is rapidly changing, due to the brave pioneering work of Red Bus Limited.

All this didn't happen overnight. Old attitudes towards disabled people had to change. We also had to weld together a firm stance on our rights to public transport. There were many disputes, not a few angry moments, but reason, commonsense, economics and top line transport design won a victory. This triumph of mutual help across a wide canvas of Christchurch society has put our city streets - no pun intended – miles ahead of others in the country.

The fresh new access to public transport – assisted of course by an increase in the number of wheelchair taxis – has ensured that we take our rightful place as ordinary members of our city. We can now move around far far better than before. With patience, an understanding of the pace of planned accurate change, the future is bright. OK we have waited. But we have been listened to and the firm who responded to our insistent pleas for a “fair go” deserves wide public praise.

This was given, in part, during a recent visit by DPA president Gloria Weeks, administrator Linda Telfer and representatives of the Regional Executive Committee and the wider DPA membership to Red Bus H/Q This also pointed to more exciting innovations ahead. They met Operations Manager for Red Bus Ltd, Bruce Kenyon & bus designer Phillip Hindin for an in-depth discussion which both Gloria and Linda rated as “brilliant”.

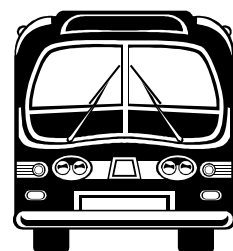
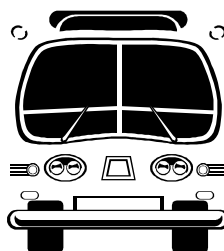
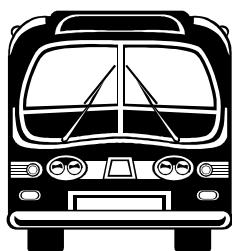
So here's some of the progress made and pointers to the future, with Bruce Kenyon appropriately having the final word:-

- All four of the distinctive *Shuttles* have been fitted with rear door access.
- A trial surveillance camera is currently installed to allow the bus driver to monitor entry and exit from both front and rear doors. This will also boost general security for all.
- Current Red Bus fleet is 50% low floor access. Bruce projects the fleet will be 80% totally accessible in about seven years. (Worth remembering that the Bus Exchange has low floor buses clearly marked on all main office timetables)
- Introduction of the Metro Card will increase our independence as it will be able to be “swiped” at the rear entrance/exit.
- The wheelchair “parking” space in some buses immediately opposite the rear door will from now on be a feature of ALL new buses.
- Ideas are being canvassed to have more “appropriate” signs. For example one new idea that appeals is “wheelchair preference space”. That gives us, the passenger with a disability, some choice.

And some words from Bruce Kenyon who has promised to keep DPA well informed on progress in providing further help “on the buses.”

“What has been achieved in something like five years has I agree given a new face to public transport in Christchurch. It has been a totally co-operative effort which I know has been of profound benefit to many people. Many groups such as the Christchurch City Council, Environment Canterbury and of course DPA and individuals have worked very hard. We have a result through all areas of public transport of which to be very proud,” Bruce said.

John Brown



DPA Planning for Future Leadership

Gary Williams DPA CEO

DPA is now 20-years-old. In that time, we have managed to put "disability" on to many agendas, including the Government's, and we've started to get acknowledgement of us and our needs. It has been a slow, but rewarding, process.

Such progress cannot just happen, it needs planning and leadership. For DPA, we have been fortunate in that we have had very capable leaders who have understood the vision of DPA and were prepared to pull up their sleeves and get on with it.

But things are changing. As with other community organisations, our leadership is ageing but we can't seem to attract new and/or younger people to take over the lead. One particular concern I have is that younger people are benefiting from all the work that others have done in the past and have no appreciation of the efforts that have been put in to get their world to the point that they know today.

Most of us who have been around for a while are aware of how tenuous everything is and that the hard-fought gains we've made are not guaranteed forever.

Therefore DPA has initiated a youth development leadership programme to ensure that we have an ongoing supply of leaders for the foreseeable future. As the world becomes more complex and sophisticated, it is unrealistic to rely on the old "sink or swim" theory when finding new leaders. All organisations must engage in some sort of succession/leadership planning.

Our leadership development programme consists of targeting young disabled people who have the potential to become great leaders, giving them a basic understanding of disability issues in New Zealand, enhancing their current skills and teaming them up with mentors to extend their current capabilities.

I know that in the future, graduates from our programme will be assuming leadership roles in all kinds of organisations, not just DPA.

Source: *New Dialogue (Federation of Voluntary Welfare Organisations) Issue 4 March 2003*

More than Just a Word

Researching the New Rehabilitation was mounted as a unique seminar at the Allan Bean Centre "to celebrate the importance of rehabilitation research in NZ" in March this year.

I wrote to the key note speaker Dr Gerben De-Jong. I was eagerly anticipating a response which indicated active participation of disabled people in the planning, promotion and presentation of the seminar together with an offer to send him a paper I had written from "the hot seat" of experience. After all I am a pretty ancient female (the great 70 next birthday) who has been wheelchair-bound for 30 years since a spinal injury left me immobile from a fairly high level - I am typing this by mouth. I have had a very interesting 'new life' and have some personal views on the scene in general. I was optimistic that Dr De Jong might be one of the few who listens to the person who is actually involved instead of to all the 'experts' but regrettably several times I wrote and have yet to receive a reply,

Following my accident in 1973 the future appeared to offer only a bleak, narrow existence as a burden. I found that overnight I had ceased to be a member of the human species, I was suddenly a 'thing', a job of work. At that time, what passed under the guise of 'rehabilitation' was unbelievable as was the whole authoritarian attitude. There was nothing that the 'experts' in the field of 'rehabilitation' could suggest or provide that contained any purpose or that was, in any way, fruitful.

I pondered upon the word, 'rehabilitation', and the mystique built up around it - the inference that a colossal brain-washing session is necessary before one can function as a 'normal' human being again. A trip to the dictionary confirmed my inner conviction that the word is a misnomer, too synonymous with 'manipulation'. That higher authority, 'The Shorter Oxford Dictionary', tells us that the meaning is, 'to restore or re-establish the character or good name of a person degraded or attainted, their privileges, rank and possessions;

Continued on page 6

to restore to the previous condition'. Well, I did not feel that my character had undergone any drastic change. I was still my mediocre self. My 'privileges, rank and possessions' which had certainly shrunk to the minimal overnight, stood no chance of improvement within the narrow confines of the 'experts' ideas and as for 'restoring to a previous condition', a broken neck is a broken neck - they do shoot horses, don't they ?

The paragraph above was written over twenty years ago - I believe that the word rehabilitation is now definitely outmoded and that FACILITATION would better suit the purpose and this day and age.

I really hope that Dr De Jong found a good smattering of CONSUMERS in his audience in March, including representatives of the 'elderly', some stroke victims, some neurological diseases and some who encountered accidents prior to April 1974 and the benefits of ACC and therefore became the 'poor (very poor) relatives of the new elite. By the way, this is not a jealously issue, the 'elite' merely get what they need, but so should the others mentioned above and then they could afford to attend the seminar !

Yours sincerely,

Olive J. Brown

Editor's comment:

Olive's letters to Dr De Jong were forwarded to the seminar organizers at the Spinal Unit for comment but nothing was forthcoming.

TO CATCH A BUS OR NOT

Looking at the proposed new bus routes in Christchurch with low-floor accessible buses being introduced on these routes as early as possible, it is hard to realise that the first accessible bus in Christchurch came into service during 1997.

Presently, 50% of the total fleet in Christchurch are accessible, with 95% of the inter-peak routes (9.00am – 2.30pm) serviced by accessible buses. A goal by 2008 is to have all inter-peak routes accessible. An interesting fact is the cost of a new accessible 39-seater is \$270,000. Front-loading buses require a tight manual wheelchair with a high degree of mobility skills of the user. Rear-loading buses can allow more room for power wheelchairs and larger manual wheelchairs due to the door's location in relation to the bus's wheel arches. On Red Buses Series 300 the number on the front of the bus indicates front-loading. The number 600 on the front of the bus indicates front- and rear-loading. If in doubt, contact Metro Info 366-8855 or their website <www.metroinfo.org.nz>. Also remember you can transfer between bus routes using the City Bus Exchange, eg, on route 60 (Parklands to New Brighton) at the Palms you can transfer onto the Orbiter. I can recommend the Orbiter ring route if you have friends in town and you can hop off and have a break at one of the many malls encountered and then recommence your travel.

In the future, larger capacity buses are planned and the rear-loading effort will be made even easier. Working with the Red Bus Company and DPA, it is anticipated that the cumbersome existing wheelchair strap will be removed and replaced with a diagonal shoulder strap which will give the chair occupant stability and prevent the wheelchair from moving. The future on this form of transport is looking bright, so get out there and travel. I believe, to prevent you travelling distances along the route to the nearest bus station, that a driver may drop you off if asked. The future for accessible public transport is certainly improving; for example, trains are now accessible from Palmerston North to Wellington. At least one South Canterbury rural bus company has a hoist fitted to include wheelchair passengers.

Yours sincerely

Graham Tapper
Programme Coordinator, Burwood Spinal Unit

ACHIEVE, the National Post Secondary Education Disability Network:

is currently developing a 'Code of Practice for New Zealand Tertiary Education Providers.' The aim of this Code will be to provide guidelines for developing a non-disabling tertiary education environment for students with impairments in New Zealand. The Code of Practice will provide a tool for Tertiary Education Providers to examine current teaching practices, support services and set future directions. It is not just for Disability Support Services. It should be an overarching policy document used by all areas within a tertiary institution, to create an inclusive environment for students with impairments. The 'Draft Code of Practice' is now available for comment until the end of May. There will be an opportunity to provide feedback either individually or by attending one of the Regional Forums to be held to discuss the 'Draft Code of Practice'.

You are invited to attend one of these Regional Forums to be held in Christchurch. If you can't attend a Regional Forum, a copy of the 'Draft Code of Practice' and an opportunity to provide 'individual feedback' will also be available on the ACHIEVE website www.achieve.org.nz.

Christchurch Regional Forum: Date: Friday 30th May 2003, Time: 9.00am - 12.00noon.

The Coppertop, Commerce building, Canterbury University.

Please RSVP to Gill Fowler, Students with Disabilities Co-ordinator,
University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch,
(03)364 2350, Fax: (03) 364 2091, Email: gill.fowler@canterbury.ac.nz.

Civil Defence "Alert"

Sunday March 16 and "we" made history – or something very close to it.

The venue was Papanui High School – temporary operations base for a Civil Defence exercise. Planned – on paper at least – with military precision, the exercise run under the umbrella of the official Civil Defence protocol, was set to cope with the "results" of a major earthquake and flood. Volunteers played the role of victims. Such groups as the Salvation Army, Red Cross, RSPCA, the Fire Brigade etc weighed in with care and support.

But one group put their stamp on a CD exercise as never before. These were all disabled people – five from DPA and four from other groups. These folk presented a real challenge to the CD exercise. For the first time volunteers did not "act" as disabled people. Nine WERE disabled. Their presence at the CD exercise was in response to a request from John Brown, a DPA committee member who is the DPA rep. on a local CD committee.

To suggest that those running the CD exercise were surprised at how to cope with the needs of disabled people is a massive understatement.. Many "officials" were perplexed. Some had clearly never tried to communicate with a deaf person. No one had expected deaf people. No one had organised an interpreter. And yet this was an exercise which sought to cope with public needs issues that a real disaster would throw up. Someone who was blind was forced to cope with electric cords placed across doorway openings. Others vainly sought toilets accessible to wheelchairs.

But the end result was NOT a failure. It was a huge success – why? Because disabled volunteers put their determined stamp on CD exercises for years to come. No more will it suffice to have people "acting" disabled.

Christchurch showed it had a willing group of "reality" people on tap to help prepare the CD organisation for (we hope never) the "big one".
John Brown



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17 June 2003

Office Hours
Monday and Tuesday
9.30am - 5.30pm
Answerphone
cleared regularly throughout
the week.

Noticeboard

weka

What Every- one Keeps Asking ..
about disability information.

www.weka.net.nz

This highly recommended website was launched on 28 April. Please visit this site and forward any feedback to Bernice or Jenni at the Disability Information Service.

CITY WEBSITE HOTSPOTS

Well worth visiting.

"Heart of the City" - Two Day Celebration

Friday 16 and Saturday 17 May 2003

The Central City Revitalisation Project is preparing a celebration of what's new and exciting in the Central City. The event is designed to promote the central city as a great place to live, work and play. Details:

www.ccc.govt.nz/CentralCity/Newsletter/autumn2003/#2

What's next for **Cathedral Square**

The granite pavers on the roadway are to be replaced with asphalt, lighting is to be improved and planning for the North West quadrant is currently underway. Please click here for more details:

www.ccc.govt.nz/CentralCity/Newsletter/autumn2003/#3

Opening of the new **Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu** opens on Saturday 10 May 2003. For more details:

www.ccc.govt.nz/CentralCity/Newsletter/autumn2003/#6

The installation of the art gallery's entrance sculpture **Reasons for Voyaging** is well underway and makes a dramatic entrance.

\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ Financial Planning \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

The Committee is anxious to improve its financial situation. One of the ideas is to arrange a production run of coffee mugs with the DPA logo. To determine the feasibility we would appreciate an indication of your interest. The mugs would cost \$5 each. Please contact the office if you are interested with an indication of the numbers of mugs you would like. Thank you.

Telephone 379 8525

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in articles contributed to this newsletter are not necessarily those of DPA Christchurch & Districts or DPA (NZ) Inc.

Readers are, however, welcome to submit articles of interest to the DPA membership.

Please note the publication deadline date on this page.

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